



**SLOVAKIA
EXPLORER**



Way of St James - Kosice to Levoca

Last updated: 03/02/2021

Walking the way of St. James in Slovakia.

Holiday code: TKL

Countries included: Slovakia

Activity level: 3

Themes: Walking and Trekking

Tour type: Guided or Self-Guided

Minimum age: 16

Duration: 8 days

Available in: May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct

Overview

On this Camino de Santiago walking tour in Slovakia, you'll follow the ancient pilgrim walking route known as the Way of St. James across the spectacular Carpathian Mountains. From Kosice, the European capital of culture in 2013, you'll walk the 100km route to the UNESCO medieval town of Levoca. Your precise starting point will be St Elizabeth's Cathedral, the easternmost Gothic cathedral in Europe, and you'll trek across eastern Slovakia to reach the basilica of St James, home to the biggest wooden altar in the world. This route is a tremendous combination of natural treasures, cultural highlights, and pilgrimage sites in gothic Slovakia. It's officially connected with the international routes of St. James, Europe's most popular pilgrim walking route, which stretches across Europe all the way to the Spanish cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, home to the tomb of the apostle of St James.



**SLOVAKIA
EXPLORER**

Over eight days you'll experience:

- **The city of Kosice**, which was the European capital of culture in 2013.
- **The beautiful Carpathian Mountains** and their unspoilt natural beauty.
- **Spectacular views** over mountain villages, medieval mining towns, and the majestic High Tatras.
- **Spissky Castle**, the biggest in central-eastern Europe.
- **Spissky Jerusalem** – a unique area reminiscent of ancient Jerusalem.
- **Slovak Paradise national park** with the highest concentration of rare plants per square metre in Europe.
- **Levoca and Saint Mary's Hill** – one of the oldest pilgrim sites in Slovakia.

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in Kosice.

Welcome to Kosice, a unique European metropolis and European capital of culture 2013. Kosice has many claims to fame – it's home to the oldest marathon in Europe, the longest promenade in Slovakia, and the easternmost Gothic cathedral in Europe to name a few. But most importantly it's home to the starting point of the official Slovakian Camino de Santiago route, known as the Way of St. James.

When you arrive, you'll be briefed about the programme for the week. Dinner on your first day is included and will be served in the hotel's restaurant. Depending on your arrival time there might be time for a stroll in Kosice's old town to visit some of the biggest attractions, including the cathedral of St Elizabeth.

Meals included

Dinner

Accommodation

Hotel Maraton (or similar)

Day 2: Walk to Volovske hills and Golgota, then to Kojsovska Hola.

Those that want to participate in the morning mass at St Elizabeth cathedral can do so either at 6am or 7am today. Whether you are a believer or not, participation in the morning Holy Mass, while listening to the local master playing the organ, is a great starting point for your Camino walking adventure.

After breakfast, the walking starts with a hike to Kosice's calvary. On the way you'll pass a wooden church built in 1741, and walk up the holy stairs in the church of the Virgin Mary of the Seven Sorrows.

Our route then continues to the recreation centre of Jahodna, from where you'll follow the route through beautiful Kosice's forests all the way to Volovske hills and the Kojsovska Hola (1,246 m) viewpoint. This offers spectacular panoramic views of the area and on the High and Low Tatra mountains.

Total walking

Distance: 13,5 km
Total ascent: 770 m
Total descent: 215 m
Max elevation: 1 165 m
Min elevation: 574 m

Meals included

Breakfast, packed lunch

Accommodation

Chata Erika hut

Day 3: Follow the footsteps of St James to the mining town of Gelnica.

This morning you'll head to the hidden jewel of Eastern Slovakia, the mining town of Gelnica. It dates back to the 13th century and was one of the most important mining towns in the Hungarian monarchy, mining copper ore, gold, silver, quicksilver, and iron core.

Today's route will offer you stunning views on villages below you, including a breathtaking view over the town of Gelnica from the viewpoint known as Gloriet.

When you arrive at Gelnica we recommend visiting the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the mining museum. If you prefer more adventurous activities, you could visit one of the accessible minim tunnels.

Total walking

Distance: 14 km
Total ascent: 140 m
Total descent: 920 m
Max elevation: 1132 m
Min elevation: 346 m

Meals included

Breakfast, packed lunch

Accommodation

Penzion pod Hradom (or similar)

Day 4: Walk across the Carpathians to Krompachy.

Heading west, today's route will lead you through the area known as Turzov. Here you'll find the Chapel of the Holy Cross and two picturesque lakes, then slowly enter a coniferous forest with an enchanting fragrance. This is where the popular "oxygen path" can be found.

After approximately 4km of gradual ascent we'll reach the highest point of today's walk, after which you'll head to the popular ski centre of Plejsy. This final part is simply magical as you walk out of the forest with spectacular views on the ski centre below you. It's the perfect spot for a break with views of Spissky castle and the High Tatras mountains in the distance.

Total walking

Distance: 13 km

Total ascent: 634 m
Total descent: 618 m
Min elevation: 308 m
Max elevation: 901 m

Meals included

Breakfast, packed lunch

Accommodation

Penzion Plejsy (or similar)

Day 5: Walk to the heart of the Spissky region, home to several UNESCO sites.

This morning the route will lead you through quiet villages, gradually reaching the highest point of today's walk. The scenery is simply spectacular as you walk through the meadows, home to local shepherds and their flocks of sheep.

The path then continues west as the scenery opens up to the majestic High Tatras and Spissky castle in front of you. You'll then continue to the village of Zehra with its dominant sight, the wooden church of Holy Spirit, which is on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage list. Your route then continues through the protected area of Drevenik all the way to Spissky castle, the biggest castle in central-eastern Europe. From here you'll descend to the Spisske Podhradie, your home for the night.

Total walking

Distance: 19,5 km
Total ascent: 898 m
Total descent: 847 m
Max elevation: 596 m &
Min elevation: 365 m

Meals included

Breakfast, packed lunch

Accommodation

Pension St Martin (or similar)

Day 6: Walk to Spissky Jerusalem and the UNESCO town of Levoca.

After breakfast you'll head to Levoca. This long but rewarding walk is full of world-class monuments. With its Marianska Hora (the hill of Virgin Mary), Levoca is the biggest pilgrim site in Slovakia.

Today is very rich in cultural, natural and spiritual sites that would be tricky to find anywhere else in Europe. The first one on today's list is the fortified seat of Spisska Kapitula, with its most valuable gothic cathedral of St Martin. After that it's Spissky Jerusalem, which recalls ancient Jerusalem in one-to-one scale.

From there, you'll head to the hill of Virgin Mary with its Basilica of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. From here you'll descend to the ancient town of Levoca. With its preserved city walls and the Basilica of St James representing the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, this is a magical end to your Slovakian Camino walking adventure.

Total walking

Distance: 26 km
Total ascent: 1 103 m
Total descent: 953 m
Max elevation: 957 m
Min elevation: 434 m

Meals included

Breakfast, packed lunch

Accommodation

Hotel U Leva (or similar)

Day 7: Enjoy a free day for optional activities.

Waking up in medieval Levoca surrounded by protected areas and national parkland provides an almost endless list of optional activities. After an optional morning Holy Mass in the Basilica of St James we recommend you visit the town's hall. For the rest of the day other options include relaxing in hot thermal springs in nearby Vrbov, hiking in the national park of Slovak Paradise, or perhaps visiting some of the most attractive villages in the national park of the High Tatras. There are many options and our experts will help you with anything you might need.

Meals included

Breakfast

Accommodation

Hotel U Leva (or similar)

Day 8: Your tour comes to an end.

After breakfast your tour comes to an end. Want to explore more of this area? Consider booking a short walking break in the Slovak Paradise national park, where Levoca would be your base, or perhaps one of our walking tours in the nearby High Tatras, the biggest and oldest national park in Slovakia.

Meals included

Breakfast

Essential Holiday Information

Is this trip right for you?

This walking holiday is suitable for those who enjoy longer distance walks, walking from point to point. Walks are technically not demanding, but you should be fit enough to walk between 13 to 26km each day. Your main luggage will be transferred by our local staff to your next accommodation each day, so all you have to carry during your walks is your daily pack with a packed lunch.

What's Included

- Three nights in three-star hotels
- One night in a mountain hut

- Three nights in three-star pensions
- Seven breakfasts, five packed lunches
- Luggage transfers
- Maps and detailed route descriptions, routes for GPS devices
- 24/7 local support

What's not Included

- Flights
- Arrival and departure airport transfers
- Travel insurance
- Optional activities mentioned in the itinerary
- Tour guide - this is a self-guided trip. For a supplement you can join a guided departure.

Optional

Single room supplement: 80 EUR

Solo traveller: 155 EUR (includes single room supplement)

Max group size

Normally max 16.

Start point

This tour starts in Kosice.

End point

This tour ends in Levoca.

Flights & Airports

To enhance flexibility our holidays do not include flights. This gives you the freedom to choose a local airport that works for you and shop for the best deal.

List of airports with distances to the first hotel in Kosice:

Košice Airport – 12 km

Poprad Airport – 117 km

Krakow Airport – 266 km

Bratislava Airport – 396 km

Budapest Airport – 267 km

Vienna Airport – 460 km

Getting there & Airport transfers

Once you've decided which airport works best for you, you'll need to choose how to get to the starting hotel / joining point. There are two options:

Public transport

You can reach Kosice by public transport (bus, train). Using public transport is another way of experiencing your destination, which puts you right in the centre of the action. If you prefer to travel by public transport we can help you find the best option.

Private transfers (door-to-door service)

Book your private airport transfers directly with us. Our fast, reliable and affordable private transfers are the best way to reach your starting hotel quickly and comfortably. For up-to-date prices of airport private transfers click [here](#).

Accommodation

During this tour you will stay in three star pensions and hotels.

Extra Nights

If you need to arrive or leave on a different date, please contact us and we'd be more than happy to arrange extra pre- or post-tour accommodation for you in many popular destinations.

Packing

We recommend you pack as light as possible, with suitcases or backpacks that are easy to lift and carry. A daypack for activities is also useful. Below you will find a recommended packing list. It is by no means exhaustive, so if you're in any doubt, please contact us.

- Walking boots
- Trainers
- Shorts and t-shirts
- Walking trousers and tops
- Fleece or warm jumper
- Waterproofs
- Water bottle
- Small first-aid kit
- Sun cream, sunglasses and sunhat

Itinerary disclaimer

Please note, we want to run this trip following the day-to-day itinerary on the trip notes. However, sometimes operational circumstances may prevent us from doing this. Your tour leader will keep you fully informed of any alternative plans that are necessary on-the-ground. Also, based on feedback from past travellers, occasionally our itineraries are amended. The final version of your trip notes will be emailed to you prior to travel.

Ready to go? Signing up is quick and easy!

1. Check availability online or contact us by email or phone.
2. Secure your place/s online by clicking the BOOK NOW button or contact us by email/phone. Your place is secured with a 99 EUR deposit per person and can pay by bank transfer.
3. Once the deposit is received a confirmation email will be sent to your email automatically, and your

place/s will be officially confirmed.

Need more information?

Feel free to contact us if you have any questions at all. Our knowledgeable and helpful team is here to help, and we look forward to welcoming you to our spectacular country soon!

Why book with Slovakia Explorer

Slovakia Explorer is the first fully licensed tour operator to offer the chance to experience the easternmost part of the ancient route of St James, known as the Camino de Santiago in Slovakia. Under the guidance of our experienced team, you will soak up the atmosphere of gothic Slovakia and discover the tremendous natural, cultural, and spiritual assets that Eastern Slovakia has to offer. Your luggage will be transferred from point to point so you will only carry your daily pack, focusing instead on following the footsteps of St James.

